



اوتوري تي كجسا ان كسلامتن  
كصيجتن دن عالم سكيتر  
Safety Health and Environment  
National Authority

## Note to Industry (NTI)

TOPIC <b>General Advisory for Workplace in Response to COVID-19</b>			Reference Number 2020/NTI/03
Approved by: Chief Inspector	Issue date: 03 <sup>rd</sup> April 2020	Expiry date: None	Revision No: 1.4

**Purpose: This Notification to Industry serves to provide guidance to all workplaces in Brunei Darussalam in response to the outbreak of the 2019 coronavirus disease (COVID-19). This Guidance shall apply with immediate effect.**

All principals, employers, occupiers and employees in Brunei Darussalam are reminded to observe the Workplace Safety and Health Order (WSHO), 2009 and take precautionary measures to curb the spread of the COVID-19 virus.

Employers should treat this matter most seriously and are advised to take appropriate control and preventive actions to protect employees from risk of exposure to COVID-19, especially those in the frontline services.

Employers are reminded to carry out risk assessment and improve work procedures to reduce the risk of exposure to their employees and visitors at their workplaces, from the virus.

Employers need to ensure prevention measures are in place against the COVID-19 spread in the workplace and identify employees who have been to COVID-19 affected countries by conducting health surveillance on those employees and by sending them to seek urgent treatment if they have symptoms such as fever, cough and breathing difficulties. Temperature checks for persons at points of entry to office buildings and other establishments is strongly recommended.

Workplace safety and health officer/ HSE Representative/ HSE Focal Point or relevant health and safety department/ unit in the respective workplace shall promote and communicate necessary information to all communities in the workplace and visitors in combating the spread of COVID-19 through any means such as briefing, posters, intranet communication.

## **A) PREVENTING THE SPREAD OF COVID-19 IN YOUR WORKPLACE**

Control measures as far as reasonably practicable can be implemented in your workplace to protect your employees, students (in case of educational institutions), contractors, visitors, and clients.

- **Ensure the cleanliness and hygiene of your workplace**
  - This can be done by frequently cleaning surfaces in your workplace such as desks and tables as well as objects such as door handles, keyboards and telephones with disinfectant.
  - More frequent cleaning in general public access areas such as lifts, pantries, toilets and disposal bin areas.
  
- **Promote regular hand-washing by employees, students, contractors, visitors and clients**
  - Put sanitising hand rub dispensers in prominent places around the workplace and make sure these dispensers are regularly refilled.
  - Communicating and promoting of hand-washing by displaying posters, announcement through PA system and briefing during workplace event such as meeting, conference, seminar and etc.
  - Making sure the employees, students, contractors, visitors and customers have access to places where they can wash their hands with soap and running water.
  
- **Promote temperature monitoring or checks**
  - Put in place arrangements to monitor and check temperature of persons entering your establishment.
  - Advise any persons who display signs of above normal temperature to seek professional medical advice.
  
- **Promote good respiratory hygiene in the workplace**
  - Displaying posters promoting respiratory hygiene.
  - Ensuring that face masks and/ or paper/facial tissues are available at your workplaces, for those who develop a runny nose or cough at work, along with closed bins for hygienically disposing them.

- **Consultation upon business trips or non-essential travel plans**
  - Commencing 16th March 2020, all Citizens and residents of Brunei Darussalam including foreigners are restricted from leaving the country, except in certain circumstances such as undergoing urgent medical care, attending court hearings or resuming study abroad.
  - Consider putting off non-essential travel plans/business trips
  - If a business trip or essential travel is required, permission needs to be obtained through the Prime Minister's Office. Requests for permission to leave the country can now be applied online from the Prime Minister's Office website [www.pmo.gov.bn](http://www.pmo.gov.bn). Further information can also be obtained from the Guidelines for Application to Exit Country for Citizens and residents of Brunei Darussalam from the aforementioned website.
  - Advise employees to consult national travel advice before going on business trip.
  
- **Advice to stay at home**
  - If the employees, students and contractors develop symptoms of high fever or signs of respiratory infection such as dry cough or shortness of breath, they should be advised to stay at home (or work from home).
  
- **Frontline staff**
  - Employers to provide appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) for staff.
  - Employers should establish clear guidance to frontline staff on how to handle customers who are unwell.
  - Frontline workers can advise customers who are visibly unwell to go see a doctor immediately.
  - If it is necessary to provide urgent services to clients who are unwell, employers should also establish proper procedures to safeguard their employees and other clients (for example, having frontline workers wear a surgical mask, and serving these clients separate from other clients )

## **B) CONSIDERATION BEFORE, WHILE AND AFTER TRAVELLING**

Based on the Minister of Health's Media Statement on 15<sup>th</sup> March 2020, commencing 16<sup>th</sup> March 2020, **all Citizens and residents of Brunei Darussalam are restricted from leaving the country**, except in certain circumstances such as undergoing urgent medical care, attending court hearings or resuming study abroad.

Requests for permission to leave the country are subject to the approval of the Prime Minister's Office and can now be applied online from the Prime Minister's Office website [www.pmo.gov.bn](http://www.pmo.gov.bn). Further information can also be obtained from the [Guidelines for Application to Exit Country for Citizens](#) and residents of Brunei Darussalam from the aforementioned website.

Those who are travelling abroad are advised to take precautionary measures and to prioritise personal hygiene practices to avoid risk of infection.

### **Before travelling:**

- Get the latest information on areas where COVID-19 is spreading via <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/situation-reports/> to assess the benefits and risks related to upcoming travel plans.
- Keep yourself updated with the latest information from a trusted source, similar to Ministry of Health or others.
- Avoid sending employees who may be at higher risk of serious illness (e.g. older employees and those with medical conditions such as diabetes, heart and lung disease) to areas where COVID-19 is prevalent.
- Making sure all persons travelling to locations reporting COVID-19 are briefed by a qualified professional (e.g. staff health services, health care provider or local public health partner)
- Consider issuing employees who are about to travel with small bottles (under 100 centiliter) of alcohol-based hand rub. This can facilitate regular hand-washing.

### **While travelling:**

- Encourage employees, students, contractors, visitors and clients to wash their hands regularly and stay at least one meter away from people who are coughing or sneezing
- Ensure employees and students know what to do and who to contact if they feel ill while travelling.
- Ensure that your employees and students comply with instructions from Ministry of Health, Brunei Darussalam when they are travelling. Your employees should comply with any local restrictions on travel, movement or large gatherings.

### **Return from travelling:**

Employers shall ensure employees, students and contractors abide with the necessary actions taken upon their return of travelling from countries according to their respective category.

### **C) PREPARATION IN A WORKPLACE**

- Develop a plan of what to do if someone becomes ill with suspected COVID-19 at one of your workplaces
  - The plan should cover putting the ill person in a room or area where he is isolated from others in the workplace, limiting the number of people who have contact with the ill person and contacting the local health authorities.
  - Consider how to identify persons who may be at risk, and support them, without inviting stigma and discrimination into your workplace. This include persons who have recently travelled to an area reporting cases, or other personnel who have conditions that put them at higher risk of serious illness (e.g. diabetes, heart and lung disease, older age).

- Promote regular teleworking across your organisation. If there is an outbreak of COVID-19 in your community the health authorities may advise people to avoid public transport and crowded places. Teleworking will help your business keep operating while your employees stay safe.
- Develop a contingency and business continuity plan for an outbreak in the communities where your business operates.

**D) PROCEDURES FOR WORKPLACES IN THE EVENT OF A MEMBER OF STAFF BEING DIAGNOSED WITH COVID-19**

- In the event of a confirmed case of COVID-19 identified in a member of staff, the duty officer from the Ministry of Health will inform the relevant Head of Department of the confirmed case of COVID-19 in the workplace. If you are aware of a member of staff who was confirmed as a case of COVID-19 through another source, contact the 24-hour hotline at 148 and deliver the contact details of an identified focal point for Ministry of Health to contact and follow up.
- The principal, employer or occupier should identify a senior officer to be the main focal point between the Ministry of Health and the workplace.
- The focal point should identify all staff who were in contact with the confirmed case since the time that the case became symptomatic. This includes:
  - All staff who share an office space or area if in an open place office
  - Close colleagues and other collaborators
  - Staff who shared meeting rooms
  - Other staff who were in a confined space with the case for more than 30 minutes
- All identified staff should be sent home, isolate themselves, and advised to await further instructions. Self-isolation is strongly recommended.

- The workplace focal point should compile a list of all workplace contacts with the following information:
  - Name
  - Contact number
  - Identity card
- This list is to be sent to the Ministry of Health duty officer and the workplace focal point should await further instructions from the Ministry on the necessary measures. These measures may include quarantine and/or presenting themselves to a designated site for testing.

For further information, principals/employers/occupiers and individuals can contact the Ministry of Health's Health Advice Line at 148 which operates 24 hours every day.

All principals/employers/occupiers and individuals are advised to check for the latest updates on the COVID-19 infection at the Ministry of Health's website at [www.moh.gov.bn](http://www.moh.gov.bn)

All principals / employers/ occupiers and individuals are also encouraged to use the COVID-19 Self-Assessment Tool via [healthinfo.gov.bn](http://healthinfo.gov.bn) to aid the Ministry of Health in monitoring and evaluating the COVID-19 situation in Brunei Darussalam, as well as to plan ahead to address the COVID-19 situation.

SHENA seeks the support of all relevant stakeholders in ensuring Brunei is a safe place to work and live. For enquiries or further clarification, please contact **SHENA** as per below

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**END**